



A letter from

ALISTAIR BEGG

MARCH 2022

In 1976, when I was assistant to Derek Prime at Charlotte Chapel, Bruce Milne was a guest speaker for a special weekend. I can still recall his sermons and the manner in which they were delivered. As a young man, hoping to learn how to preach, I paid careful attention, as he provided a model of humility, clarity, and warm persuasiveness. In due course, he moved to Canada to lecture alongside the late J. I. Packer at Regent College. His best-known book has been a staple diet for the leadership here at Parkside. *Know the Truth* is of immense help in understanding basic Christian doctrine.

It is vital that we know what we believe and why we believe it. Early this morning, I overheard a conversation as a chef witnessed clearly and kindly to a security guard, explaining the wonder of God's love

continued

in Jesus. Such opportunities abound, and we must be ready to give an answer to those who ask about the basis of our hope.

It is important for us not only to know what we believe but also to be convinced about where we belong. Part of the fallout of COVID can be seen in the missing members in local churches. Some have gone online, while others are offline and basically out of line with God's purpose for His people! This is not to pass judgment on those who on account of age or infirmity are prevented from doing what they most desire. It is instead a call for those who have gone missing to rethink their church involvement. I am challenged and encouraged by Steve Turner's observation:

The church humbles us. It is one of the few places in our societies today where we sit with rich and poor, young and old, black and white, educated and uneducated, and are focused on the same object. It is one of the few places where we share the problems and hopes of our lives with people we may not know. It is one of the few places where we sing as a crowd. Although the church needs its outsiders to prevent it from drifting into dull conformity, the outsiders need the church to stop them from drifting into individualized religion.

As I reflect on what I have written, it is clear that when it comes to saying the same things again and again, I am guilty as charged! I take solace in the fact that the

apostles constantly issued reminders—“I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things” (2 Peter 1:15).

With my love in the Lord Jesus,

A handwritten signature in orange ink that reads "Alvin Boni". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PS: With May around the corner, it's a good time to encourage a pastor or church leader you know to join us at Basics May 2-4. Registration is open online at basicsconference.org.